

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

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June 23, 2026

The Honorable Christopher Cabaldon
Chair, Senate Privacy, Digital Technologies, and Consumer Protection Committee
1020 N Street, Room 568
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: AB 1337 (Ward), Expansion of Information Practices Act of 1977 – OPPOSE

Dear Senator Cabaldon,

I am writing on behalf of the Kern County Board of Supervisors to express our strong opposition to AB 1337 (Ward), which would dramatically expand the Information Practices Act of 1977 and impose its requirements on all local governments beginning in 2028. While we strongly support protecting the privacy of residents, this bill's approach is unworkable for counties and would have serious consequences for our ability to deliver essential public services.

AB 1337 would upend long-standing and effective data-sharing practices that make it possible for counties to operate critical safety-net programs. By restricting the use, transfer, and disclosure of personal information far beyond current law, including limiting data use only to the purpose for which it was originally collected, requiring that any data transfer "further the purpose" of initial collection, and prohibiting disclosures if information merely could be linked back to an individual, this bill introduces uncertainty that would stall integrated service models, complicate reporting, and weaken accountability efforts. These restrictions would result in repeated collection of the same information from residents, slowing down benefit determinations and creating real barriers for vulnerable individuals seeking help with healthcare, food assistance, housing, and other vital programs.

The bill creates additional risks by eliminating key exceptions that currently allow agencies to share information in response to search warrants and to support investigations into unlawful activity. This change could hinder law enforcement, expose children and families to avoidable danger, and place frontline staff in legally untenable positions. Counties would also face expanded liability as AB 1337 broadens the definition of prohibited disclosures, imposes discipline for negligent violations, and removes the requirement that wrongful disclosure of medical information result in economic harm or injury before criminal penalties apply. These changes would inevitably impact workforce recruitment and retention at a time when counties are already struggling to maintain staffing levels.

AB 1337 also threatens federal funding streams by prohibiting data sharing with federal agencies unless explicitly authorized in state law, a requirement that could jeopardize grants for homelessness response, public health, victim services, and human trafficking task forces. At the same time, counties would be expected to undertake massive and immediate changes to technology systems, forms, training, governance rules, and reporting structures. This unfunded mandate would require millions of dollars in new spending despite no demonstrated need for replacing the robust privacy protections counties already operate under.

For these reasons, the Kern County Board of Supervisors opposes this measure and respectfully urges your committee to vote **NO on AB 1337** to prevent unintended harm to local government, the public workforce, and, above all, the residents who rely on essential county services.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Phillip Peters", with a stylized, flowing script.

Phillip Peters, Chairman
Kern County Board of Supervisors

cc: Honorable Members, Senate Privacy, Digital Technologies, and Consumer Protection Committee
Honorable Members, Kern Legislative Delegation
California State Association of Counties
Kern County Counsel
Shaw Yoder Antwih Schmelzer & Lange